

Escalante-Milford

January 31, 1962

Mr. Lyman Willardson
Agricultural Research Service
Engineering Building
Utah State University
Logan, Utah

Dear Mr. Willardson:

In your telephone conversation with Mr. Criddle and me on Tuesday, January 30, 1962, you expressed some concern over the fluctuations in acreage claimed by the water users of Milford valley, as reported in the Water Commissioner's Annual Reports for the Milford Area of the Escalante Valley Distribution System.

I talked with Mr. Lee Strong of Beaver, Utah, Commissioner for the Milford Valley pump area for the past two years, and it appears that the mechanics of bookkeeping may leave something to be desired. Some of the details necessary for following the various rights through the reports have been omitted.

On the two specific questions concerning the J. L. Shepard farm, and the George Mayer estate farm, I hope the following information will help you to understand the reason behind the fluctuating acreages.

In 1958, George Mayer was claiming some 400 acres of water right under Water User Claims, 1609, 2003, 1989, and 1659. During the 1960 season, the Mayer estate had only 200.1 acres. His water rights were dispersed as follows:

WUC	Owner	Acreage
1609	George Mayer	200.1
2003	Kenley Taylor	40.0
1989	Richard Thompson	20.0
1659	Lapsed	

The change on 2003 for Taylor was not approved until late summer, and water was not delivered to this 40 acres. Thompson's change on 1989 was not completed until some time in February 1961, and the commissioner did not list these in the 1960 Milford report. These acreages and water rights are listed for 1961, according to Mr. Strong.

Because of the selling of land and transferring of water rights, the acreages for a particular water user may appear to increase or decrease, and the same for the overall picture for the total acreage for the system. The only acreage that would diminish would be those portions lost by lapsing of water rights or abandonment.

In regard to the J. L. Shepard farm, WUC 540 for 56.9 acres and WUC 541 for 27.3 acres, the right is limited to the irrigation of 60.5 acres, since water from one well is used to supplement water from the other well on irrigated land common to both Water User Claims. This land is farmed by Lyle Applegate and kept as a separate account from his own water rights.

Your inquiry has pointed out a weakness in our control of the change of title of these Water User Claims and being able to separate these acreages so that a researcher might make his information more intelligent.

We are immediately undertaking the task of revising or modifying the system by which the commissioner controls the transfer and deletions, in order that a better account might be kept. We expect that each transfer of right will be shown in the annual report for the year in which it occurs, and each right will show the use of water even though it is zero for that year. We would appreciate any suggestions you may have along this line.

If you still have questions concerning certain portions of the commissioner reports, or need information in some phases of your work, please call upon this office for any assistance which we may be able to give you.

Sincerely yours,

Clarence E. Erickson, Jr.
Distribution Engineer

CEE/wh